

EXHIBIT 7

Declaration of Jared Rosenberg

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**STUDENTS FOR FAIR
ADMISSIONS, INC.,**

Plaintiff,

v.

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH
CAROLINA et al.,**

Defendants.

CASE NO. 1:14-CV-954

DECLARATION OF JARED ROSENBERG

I, Jared Rosenberg, hereby make this declaration from my personal knowledge and, if called to testify to these facts, could and would do so competently:

I. Background and Role in Admissions

1. I am the Associate Director of Admissions for Evaluation at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (the “University”). With assistance from others, I am responsible for the processing and evaluation of all first-year and transfer applications to the University from the time of application to when admissions decisions are released.

2. I received my undergraduate degree from Washington University in Saint Louis in 1995, and a Master’s of College Student Personnel and Higher Education from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio in 1997.

3. From 1997 to 1999, I worked as an admissions counselor at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida, handling undergraduate admissions.

4. In August 1999, I joined the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at the University as an admissions counselor. In that role, I was involved in recruitment activities and was responsible for reading admissions applications. In 2000, I was promoted to Assistant Director, which involved additional responsibilities for managing the University’s visit program. In 2002, I was promoted to Senior Assistant Director.

5. In the summer of 2015, I became the Associate Director of Admissions for Evaluation, the position I currently hold. I report directly to the Vice Provost for Enrollment and Director of Undergraduate Admissions.

6. As Associate Director of Admissions for Evaluation, I am responsible for the entire admissions evaluation process. I oversee the training of readers—the

individuals who review and evaluate admissions applications—work with readers one-on-one, and review applications.

7. I also serve on various University committees. For example, I presently serve on a Sub Committee of Undergraduate Admissions for applicants who disclose disabilities, where I liaise with the University's Accessibility Resources and Service Office. I also serve on a committee tasked with reviewing applicants with discipline or criminal issues.

II. First-Year Admissions and Evaluations Process

8. The University's admissions process for first-year undergraduate students has two deadlines: a non-binding early action deadline and a non-binding regular decision deadline. "Non-binding" means that applicants admitted at either deadline may choose freely whether to enroll and have until May 1 to do so; none are obligated to enroll if admitted or to withdraw any applications they may have submitted to other colleges or universities.

9. The early action application deadline for first-year admissions is October 15. The regular decision application deadline for first-year admissions is January 15. Early action applicants are typically informed of their admissions decision earlier, during the last week of January, while regular decision applicants usually learn of their admissions decision during the last week of March.

10. All applicants for admission to the University must apply using the Common Application, an application for undergraduate admission which may be used to apply to over 700 colleges. The Common Application allows applicants to optionally

provide demographic information, such as gender, race, and ethnicity. Students who choose to identify themselves by race or ethnicity are not limited to one race or ethnicity, but may choose all with which they identify. Applicants are neither required to provide this information, nor is the absence of this information held against an applicant in the evaluation process.

11. Applicants must also submit the Common Application essay, which is a 250-650 word response to one of seven prompts common to all schools accepting the Common Application; two short answers, between 200-250 words, to prompts posed by the University; standardized test scores from either the SAT or the ACT; and a letter of recommendation from at least one teacher who taught the applicant in a core academic area.

12. Additionally, a school counselor must submit an applicant's official high school transcript and a secondary school statement. The secondary school statement provides information about an applicant's high school and the available curriculum. It also provides information about how the applicant compares with the rest of the applicant's high school class through comparative statistics on class rank and grade point average ("GPA") distribution.

13. Applicants may, but are not required to, also submit additional letters of recommendation, resumes, artwork, music samples, or disability-related documentation.

14. Because the University is limited by the UNC System's Board of Governors to enrolling no more than 18% of the first-year class from non-North Carolina

residents, applicants claiming North Carolina residency are also required to submit a residency verification.

15. In a typical year, the University receives more than 40,000 applications for first-year admissions. For the entering class of fall 2018, the University received a record-breaking 43,473 first-year applications for admission. This represented a 6% increase in applications over last year and the 13th consecutive year that the University has received a record number of first-year applications.

16. Following an extremely competitive and highly selective admissions process, The University accepted approximately 9,500 candidates for an admissions rate of about 22%, with in-state applicants admitted at a rate of 41% and non-North Carolina resident applicants admitted at a rate of 13%. Approximately 4,300 of the admitted students ultimately enrolled in the University's first-year class.

17. Approximately 40 readers, consisting of both full time staff and seasonal employees, review applications for admission. These readers are a diverse group of individuals with a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, including, but not limited to, talents, age, and ethnicity. The majority of readers have a background in education.

18. Application readers who are also full time Office of Undergraduate Admissions staff have responsibilities within the Office of Undergraduate Admissions in addition to evaluating applications. For example, I am an application reader but also have responsibilities for the broader admissions evaluations process, including training all of the other readers.

19. The seasonal readers are part-time employees who read and evaluate applications between October and March. Many seasonal readers return from year to year to review applications for the University.

III. Application Readers Receive Extensive Training on the University's Admissions Policies

20. All readers undergo annual training led by me and other experienced Office of Undergraduate Admissions staff. Readers with no prior experience evaluating applications for the University receive what is known as New Reader Training. At the New Reader Training, which takes place over four days, readers learn about the University's admissions policies and procedures, admissions goals, and how to evaluate applications and make admissions decisions.

21. New readers receive training regarding the computer systems used to read and evaluate applications. New readers also walk through how to read and evaluate an application by reviewing real application files from the previous year.

22. After the first two days of New Reader Training, all readers—new and returning—attend the Reader Kick-Off, a training that lasts several days. During the Reader Kick-Off, which I conduct, we review the application and evaluation processes and have philosophical discussions about what we are trying to achieve, including how we build a class, what measures matter for admissions, and what kinds of students we are seeking to admit. All readers receive an up-to-date version of the University's admissions policy document, known as the Reading Document.

23. New readers return for the final two days of New Reader Training after the completion of Reader Kick-Off.

24. Throughout these trainings, we emphasize the University's ultimate goal: to admit the best class possible. We also remind readers that the University aims to enroll a diverse class across multiple dimensions, including but not limited to diversity of experience; ideas; backgrounds; socioeconomic status; racial and ethnic background; and first generation college status. To further this goal, we instruct readers to consider each applicant as an individual based on all relevant factors revealed in his or her application in order to understand the candidate holistically and comprehensively.

25. We also train readers on how to consider an applicant's self-disclosed race or ethnicity. We teach readers to consider this information as one factor among many based on a holistic review of all circumstances relevant to an individual applicant. We do not assign special or numerical weight to an applicant's race or ethnicity and we never regard an applicant's race or ethnicity as an automatic or predetermining factor in the ultimate admissions decision. Moreover, there are no quotas, fixed points, or separate admissions processes based on a particular candidate's race or ethnicity.

26. Training of and feedback to readers continues during the evaluation process. In previous years, more experienced readers read applications behind new readers for a period of several weeks and provided feedback. This year, following the end of formal training, all readers will read applications in pairs—new readers paired with experienced readers—for three weeks.

27. Additionally, during the evaluation process, all readers meet weekly at All Office of Undergraduate Admissions staff meetings. During these meetings, we provide additional reader training, have panel discussions, and discuss as a group issues related to the topic of reading and evaluation. After the weekly meeting, the readers split into groups of three to review applications together. The weekly staff meetings and group review sessions act as ongoing learning opportunities and calibration for the readers.

IV. The University's Evaluation Process is Comprehensive, Holistic, and Individualized

28. We evaluate applications for admission to the University holistically, assessing each candidate as an individual within the context of their background and experiences. We consider how each candidate will contribute to the University community. This holistic evaluation serves the University's ultimate goal of bringing together a smart, diverse, and thoughtful class with benefits for both current and future students. (Ex. 39 (Reading Document for the 2016-2017 Application Year), UNC0323603-10.)

29. Although we review applications pursuant to certain criteria outlined below, there are no fixed weights or points assigned for specific parts of an application. We do not use formulas or fixed admissions criteria to assess applications, and there are no quotas of any kind.

30. Rather, the readers review each application for admission in its entirety, assess the candidates across specified criteria, and decide whether they should admit, waitlist, or deny candidates based on the totality of circumstances in their application file.

31. When assessing any application at any stage of the evaluation process, readers are not arbitrarily limited to a range of individual qualities they may consider. However, readers typically assess candidates using over forty criteria grouped together in eight broad categories:

- (a) Academic program;
- (b) Academic performance;
- (c) Standardized testing;
- (d) Extracurricular activity;
- (e) Special talent;
- (f) Essay;
- (g) Background; and
- (h) Personal quality.

(*Id.* at UNC0323608-9.)

32. Though readers consider a candidate's attributes and experiences across all of the eight broad categories listed above, they assign scores for only five of them: academic program, academic performance, extracurricular activity, essays, and personal qualities. There are no minimum rating thresholds or formulas, and readers do not sum up, tally, or total the ratings in any way to yield an automatic decision. Instead, the ratings merely give the readers a shorthand way of looking at an applicant and understanding the applicant's strengths and weaknesses, in light of the University's highly competitive applicant pool. We consider the remaining categories when assessing the candidate as a whole in the context of the entire applicant pool, but we do not assign numerical scores for these elements.

33. The academic program rating describes the strength and rigor of a candidate's program. It is the only category of evaluation that is objectively scored based on the number of advanced courses—Advanced Placement (“AP”), International Baccalaureate (“IB”), Cambridge (“AICE”), Project Lead The Way (“PLTW”) or dual enrollment courses—an applicant has taken. We rate each candidate's academic program on a scale of 1 to 10 with enrollment in no advanced courses receiving a score of one, enrollment in 1 to 2 advanced courses receiving a score of two; enrollment in 3 advanced courses receiving a score of 3; and enrollment in more than 3 advanced courses receiving a score corresponding to the total number of courses, up to 10 (e.g., enrollment in 6 advanced courses would receive a score of 6).

34. The academic performance rating describes a candidate's grades, patterns or trends in grades, such as marked improvement over the course of a candidate's high school years, within the context of the applicant pool . We also rate a candidate's academic performance on a scale of 1 to 10. While the academic performance rating is more subjective than the academic program rating, it is still highly calibrated so that straight As receive a score of 10, while half As and half Bs receive an approximate score of 5 or 6, and Cs on a candidate's transcript typically drop the academic performance score to 2 or 3.

35. The extracurricular activity rating focuses on a candidate's engagement and accolades outside of the classroom and academic curriculum; demonstrated leadership qualities; contributions to family, school, and community; and any other unique interests. As an example, the extracurricular activity category is where we could capture an

applicant's awards in science fairs or academic competitions. We assign a candidate's rating in this category along a scale of 1, 3, 5, 7 and 10 with quality of engagement valued over quantity. Typically, 10s are given to those applicants with an extremely high level of success or impact in what they have done, such as Olympic athletes or those receiving international acclaim.

36. The essay rating is used to assess the strength of a candidate's writing ability through his or her grammar, voice, and sentence structure. We score essays on a 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 scale with only those particular scores assigned. Notably, we do not consider the substantive topic of a candidate's essay within this category, just the quality of his or her writing. However, if a candidate's essay tells a story of something phenomenal he or she did, a reader may incorporate that aspect in the extracurricular activity or personal quality ratings.

37. The personal quality rating reflects the reader's view of a candidate's curiosity, kindness, creativity, honesty, integrity, motivation, character, impact on community, exceptional achievements, history of overcoming obstacles, open-mindedness, and talent for bridging divisions. We also consider the extent to which a candidate may contribute to the University's diversity within this category. (*Id.*) Additionally, information revealed through the substance of a candidate's essay or in teacher's or counselor's recommendations may factor into the scoring for this category. We score personal quality on a 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 scale.

38. Just as there are no minimums or preset scoring requirements for admission to the University, there is no rating that leads to an automatic admission or denial of admission.

39. We do not rate candidates based on their scores on standardized testing. Rather, we consider the applicant's results from the SAT or ACT, available SAT Subject, AP, or IB exams, as well as occasional results from state-mandated end-of-course exams as another relevant evaluation metric.

40. The background category allows readers to take into account the relative advantages or disadvantages a candidate has faced as reflected by his or her family socioeconomic circumstances, first generation college status, experience of growing up in a rural or urban environment, and, for non-resident applicants only, the candidate's status as a child or stepchild of University alumni.

41. Because we evaluate each candidate individually and holistically, the relative weight or credit assigned to any individual category may vary from candidate to candidate.

42. A candidate's race or ethnicity, should they choose to disclose it, may be considered at any stage of the evaluation process. We only consider race and ethnicity within the context of an individual candidate.

43. Since 2014, we divide readers into two tiers. Tier 1 readers exclusively conduct initial evaluations of applications, while Tier 2 readers primarily conduct secondary evaluations of applications.

44. As we receive applications, our electronic application management system randomly assigns them to Tier 1 readers. For each assigned application, a Tier 1 reader will read the application in its entirety, assess the applicant across all the specified categories, and assign ratings for the five scored categories. The Tier 1 reader will recommend a decision to admit or deny admission to the candidate and provide a comment in support of his or her recommendation. Tier 1 readers may also choose to waitlist an early action applicant, or request a second read of an application. The reader enters the ratings, comments, and decision on an electronic reader form.

45. Depending on the candidate's residency and the Tier 1 reader's recommended decision, the reader may forward the application for a Tier 2 reader's review or the Tier 1 reader's decision may become provisionally final.

46. Tier 2 reviewers are experienced Admissions staff and experienced seasonal reviewers. Tier 2 reviewers read applications requiring secondary review. A Tier 2 reviewer will read each application in its entirety and make independent assessments of the candidate across all the specified categories. Once the Tier 2 reader considers the application in its entirety, the reader will input his or her own admit or deny decision. Tier 2 readers also have the option to recommend that a candidate be waitlisted. The Tier 2 reader's recommended decision then becomes the provisionally final decision for that application.

47. Typically, Tier 1 and Tier 2 readers complete their review of applications three to four weeks prior to the release of admissions decisions for that particular admissions cycle.

48. All candidates, including those identified by University programs in music, drama, or athletics as having a special talent, are assessed through the normal holistic application evaluation process, as described above. However, if a candidate identified as having special talent that would benefit one of these University programs is denied, that application is referred for separate evaluation following unique criteria established by the Committee on Special Talent, which is charged by the Advisory Committee on Undergraduate Admissions with advising the Office of Undergraduate Admissions on the admission of such students.

V. All Admissions Decisions Are Carefully Reviewed

49. Every provisional admissions decision goes through a process designed to help ensure the quality and fairness of admissions decisions. This process, known as School Group Review (“SGR”) takes place over the three-week period prior to our release of admissions decisions to applicants. (Ex. 60 (Review of Admissions Decisions (School Group Review), October 1, 2015), UNC0079438.)

50. SGR has two primary goals. First, it allows the Office of Undergraduate Admissions to consider its expected enrollment for the incoming class and then, in an effort to avoid over- or under-enrollment, to adjust up or down the total number of students provisionally designated for admission. Second, SGR serves as a quality-control measure. It allows senior members of the Office to review the readers’ provisional admission recommendations for conformity with the University’s admissions policies and practices, and also to ensure that decisions concerning applicants from the same high school are reasonable in context.

51. We make decisions during SGR based, in part, upon the predicted number of spaces in the entering class that students who have been provisionally selected for admission are likely to fill. Jennifer Kretchmar, the Associate Director of Admissions for Research and Analytics, runs a yield assessment projection to predict enrollment. Based on the predicted enrollment, we may adjust the number of applicants who will receive an offer of admission.

52. In order to make the necessary adjustments, we review every provisional admission decision within the context of the applicant's high school. An SGR committee comprised of experienced Tier 2 reviewers conducts this review.

53. Each SGR committee member receives an assigned group of high schools to review. Reports generated for each high school from which an applicant applied for admission to the University facilitate this review. These reports include which admissions cycle each applicant applied under, as well as each applicant's provisional admission decision, class rank, grade point average, test scores, admissions ratings, residency status, legacy status, first-generation college status, recruited student-athlete status, and beginning in 2018, fee waiver status. These reports do not include a candidate's race or ethnicity.

54. SGR committee members review these reports and make an initial determination regarding whether the listed factors, when viewed in their totality, appear consistent with the provisional admissions decision for each candidate. If the reviewer identifies an inconsistent decision, the reader will re-review the underlying application for admission and determine whether the decision should be changed. As with reviews at

other stages of the evaluation process, the application evaluation in SGR is holistic and individualized.

55. We do not use the SGR process to shape the composition of the incoming class for any goals, targets, or quotas beyond ensuring a correct proportion of in- and out-of-state applicants. However, the SGR committee discusses progress toward meeting goals set by the UNC System regarding the admission of low-income North Carolinians and North Carolinians from rural counties, as well as the admission of global students.

56. Once the SGR is completed, the yield assessment projections are updated to ensure the target numbers for in-state and out-of-state admits have been reached. This is typically completed at least two days before we release final decisions to allow time for any additional required adjustments.

57. Each year, many more talented candidates apply for admission to the University than there are places available in the first-year class. While the University denies admission to applicants at the end of each admissions cycle, we may offer a small subset of highly qualified applicants without offers for admission a place on the Waiting List. If spaces become available in the entering class, we may select Waiting List candidates to receive an offer of admission.

58. A candidate offered a place on the Waiting List must affirmatively accept that offer in order to receive consideration for any spaces that may become available in the entering class. Spaces in the entering class may become available if a sufficient number of admitted candidates decline those offers or if candidates who accepted

admission change their minds and ultimately decline that offers (commonly referred to as “summer melt”).

59. We admit very few candidates from the Waiting List. For the first-year class that enrolled in fall 2018, 2,290 candidates accepted a place on the Waiting List. Of these 2,290 candidates, we made only 24 offers of admission. We make offers of admission to waitlisted candidates after we have given their application the same holistic review we employ during the regular admission process and not based on any single criteria, formula, or scoring requirement.

60. Final decisions for all candidates who accepted a spot on the Waiting List are made by June 30th.

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I declare under penalty of perjury, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, that the foregoing statements are true and correct.

Executed on January 17, 2019.


Jared Rosenberg
Associate Director of Admissions for
Evaluation